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thing of a disappointment. There is the same vivid description, the same inimitable reproduction of most enlightening conversations with the natives; but there is far too little of these things. The bulk of the book consists of detailed descriptions of ruins and of the relation of one type of architecture to another, interesting to the archæological specialist, but apt to be skipped even by a conscientious reviewer. A good deal of the rest of the book is devoted either to the ordinary traveler's tales, well told but elucidating no new principles, or else to comments on the fact that Kiepert's last map is in error.

Nevertheless, the book is interesting, and gives the reader a new point of view in three important respects. In the first place, the poverty and desolation of the greater part of Mesopotamia is sad to think upon. Little patches of cultivation close to the great river and often in danger from its floods, and a vast desert peopled by starving Arabs extending indefinitely on either side—that is all there is. In the second place, this desert is full of ruins. All the world knows this fact, but it will be a surprise to most readers to find not only that ruined villages are scattered in such extraordinary abundance that one comes upon them every two or three miles in many places, but also that so large a proportion date from the relatively recent period of the Moslem empire of the Caliphs in the middle ages. The third and perhaps most important point brought out by Miss Bell is the contrast between the immovable inertia of the people of Mesopotamia and the relative mental activity of the Syrian coast and still more of European Turkey. In no part of the Turkish Empire are the people alert in the manner of the inhabitants of Western Europe and America, but the difference between Mesopotamia and the Balkans seems to be almost as great as between the Balkans and Germany. This cannot be wholly a matter of race, but Miss Bell does not attempt to explain it. She is content to set forth the fact most convincingly by quotations from conversations on the political situation. In central Asia Minor the peasants have almost no idea of what the new régime means, but in Mesopotamia they scarcely seem to know that there is such a thing. How little the people think and how well Miss Bell hits off their salient characteristics is apparent from the following quotation:

"On the Syrian side the Euphrates is hemmed in here by hills whereon stands the castle of Salihiyeh. In this wilderness we came upon some Arabs who were ploughing up a desolate spot in search of locusts' eggs.

"Are there many locusts here?" said I, for locusts are not accustomed to lay their eggs in the sand.

"No," they answered, "there are none here; but, as God is exalted, there are thousands lower down."

"Then why do you plough here?" I asked with the tiresome persistence of the European.

"The government ordered it," said they, and resumed their task."

ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON.

Among the Tribes in Southwest China. By Samuel R. Clarke. xv and 315 pp. Map, illustrations, and appendices. Morgan & Scott, Ltd., London, 1911. 8 x 5½.

China at its edges must write the best commentary that can be established upon China at its very heart. It is at the marches that we are to look for the true spirit of Chinese culture as a civilizing force, if any such it has. In these pages we have the record of daily observation for a long life of activity of one

capable of observing what China has been able to do in centuries of intercourse with alien races and earlier inhabitants of a soil upon which Chinese expansion long ago established itself. With a recognition, as valuable as it is rare, that the record of missionary endeavor complicates the reading of the story of distant and little-known folk, the author has split his book fairly in the middle, half is ethnographic record, half is devoted to the story of the propagation of the faith. This honesty of purpose will attract the reader, the missionary pages will be found as interesting and very nearly as instructive as the former section of the book. The tribes with whose history and welfare Mr. Clarke has so long been engaged are the Miao of the province of Kweichow, which lies between Hunan and Yunnan, south of Szechwan and north of Kwang-si. Linguistically they are provisionally associable with the tonal languages which appear seated at the head-waters of the great streams which in their lower courses have become the homes of the rich cultures of Burma, Siam and Cambodia. Without strength to hold their own against the Chinese advance, too powerless to fight their way to new homes, the Miao have remained in a condition of practical slavery, a clear proof of the immiscibility of Chinese culture even with races not far from the same ethnic and culture horizon. In two chapters the author deals briefly with the Chung-chia, for whom he finds identification with the stock of the Shans of northern Burma, and the Lo-lo or No-su for which a Tibetan origin is sought.

WILLIAM CHURCHILL.

The Changing Chinese. The Conflict of Oriental and Western Cultures in China. By Edward Alsworth Ross. xvi and 356 pp. Illustrations and index. The Century Co., New York, 1911. \$2.40. 8½ x 6.

China is changeless, China is changing every hour of these its crowded days. These are all a matter of choice. To those who have essayed to create a gross psychology, the psychology of empires, China has long stood as the stock evidence of a land whose arteries have hardened and which has passed into a sort of senile communal decay, uninterested save from hand to hand in daily routine and unaroused as to a future which neither dismays nor attracts. To those who seek to follow the course of that which purports to be news, there seems a new and vivid China, a land of revolution, of a resurrection from Manchu death, a land of republican ardor. Before we can comprehend this China which changes not and this China which is fairly spinning, who can comprehend our old friend Wu Ting-fang? Is this leader of republican activity in a land which tried out and discarded the republic 2,000 years ago, is he the mystic Oriental and real? Is he wholly artificial, the creation of the American newspaper man? Frankly, I believe the latter; not only have I had a part in the creation, but I have had this belief confirmed by a Chinaman so high in the councils of his land that the Wu Ting-fangs were but the pawns with which he played the great game. Is China changing? Who knows? The chapters of this volume are little more than a year old in their former magazine source, yet Prof. Ross caught no glimpse of such an impending change as we are led to believe, yet on no authority that we can wholly trust, is now taking place in the Middle Kingdom. But change or no change, we have here an interesting story of competent observation. It is exterior observation of necessity, it is a series of judgments of the superficial Chinaman on a China surface beneath whose glaze it is so difficult to penetrate. But not of the same necessity is it superficial judgment; far from that, the author approaches his task with a recog-